

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-11 COME-00 INT-08 SCEM-02 SCI-06

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10

PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-15 USIA-15 ACDA-19

IO-15 TRSE-00 DRC-01 /148 W
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R 270430Z SEP 73

FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7047

INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

USLO PEKING

CINCPAC HONOLULU

C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 12465

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ENRG, PFOR, JA, TW

SUBJECT: SENKAKU AREA OIL DEVELOPMENT

REF: A. TOKYO 6699 (1972); B. STATE 114109 (1972)

SUMMARY: GULF OIL CONSULTANT TOLD EMBASSY TAHT ROC NOW
ACCEPTING BIDS FOR OIL CONCESSION AREAS (NEAR SENKAKUS)
WHICH ARE ALSO CLAIMED BY JAPAN. US COMPANIES EXPECTED
TO BID, AND IF SUCCESSFUL WILL BE REQUIRED TO DO SURVEY
WORK AND LATER DRILLING, BOTH OF WHICH, ACCORDING GULF
CONSULTANT, MAY PROVOKE JAPANESE. END SUMMARY.

1. DEPARTMENT WILL RECALL THAT IN JUNE 1972 EMBASSY HAD
SEVERAL DISCUSSIONS WITH JAPANESE FONOFF REGARDING ACTIV-
ITIES OF SEISMIC SURVEY VESSEL, POLLUX, OPERATED BY GULF
OIL IN SENKAKU AREA (SEE REFTELS). JAPANESE AT THAT TIME
WARNED POLLUX NOT TO OPERATE IN WATERS CLAIMED BY JAPAN.
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GULF OIL CONSULTANT, GLEN LEDINGHAM, RECENTLY MET WITH

EMBOFF AND NOTED HIS BELIEF THAT MISUNDERSTANDINGS CONCERNING CONFLICTING CLAIMS IN THE SENKAKU AREA COULD COME TO A HEAD AGAIN SOON BECAUSE OF ACTIONS BEING UNDERTAKEN BY ROC.

2. ACCORDING TO LEDINGHAM, ROC SENT OUT BID OFFERS JUNE 1, 1973 FOR EIGHT CONCESSIONS BLOCKS IN EAST CHINA SEA. FOUR OF THESE BLOCKS (ROC NUMBERS IIHI, IIH2, IIK1, AND IIK2) ARE NORTH OF THE SENKAKUS WITHIN THE AREA CLAIMED BY JAPAN. BLOCKS ALSO VERY CLOSE TO AREA WHERE POLLUX WAS INTERCEPTED BY JAPANESE COASTAL PATROL VESSEL IN JUNE 1972 AND WARNED TO SUSPEND OPERATIONS.

2. LEDINGHAM SAID HE EXPECTED AT LEAST THIRTY COMPANIES, MANY OF THEM US FIRMS, WOULD BID ON CONCESSIONS BEFORE CLOSING DATE OF OCT 31. AFTER THAT, ROC EXPECTED TO TAKE TWO MONTHS TO EVALUATE BIDS AND TO ANNOUNCE WINNER BY FIRST OF YEAR. PROBLEM THAT WILL THEN ARISE, ACCORDING LEDINGHAM, IS THAT SUCCESSFUL BIDDERS WILL BE REQUIRED BY ROC TO DO SEISMIC WORK IN FIRST YEAR (1974) AND TO COMPLETE SOME TEST DRILLINGS IN SECOND YEAR IN ORDER TO RETAIN CONCESSIONS. LEDINGHAM BELIEVES, BASED ON HIS PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE WITH POLLUX, THAT THIS WILL PROVOKE JAPANESE INTO TAKING SOME ACTION.

4. LEDINGHAM ALSO SAID HE HAS INFORMED OFFICIAL OF JAPAN PETROLEUM DEVELOPMENT CORP (JPDC) OF IMPENDING ROC MOVE TO GRANT CONCESSIONS.

5. COMMENT: WE HAVE NO WAY OF KNOWING WHETHER LEDINGHAM'S STORY IS CORRECT. WE WOULD APPRECIATE ANY BACKGROUND THAT EMBASSY TAIPEI MAY BE ABLE TO PROVIDE.
INGERSOLL

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 27 SEP 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: elyme
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973TOKYO12465
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS INGERSOLL
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: TOKYO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t1973095/aaaaadhk.tel
Line Count: 93
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: A. TOKYO 6699 (1972); B. STATE 11410, 9 (1972)
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: elyme
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 25 JUL 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <25-Jul-2001 by shawdg>; APPROVED <16-Nov-2001 by elyme>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SENKAKU AREA OIL DEVELOPMENT
TAGS: ENRG, PFOR, JA, TW
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005